



Wales,
it's us.



Plaid Cymru
Party of Wales

General Election
Manifesto 2019





Wales,
it's us.

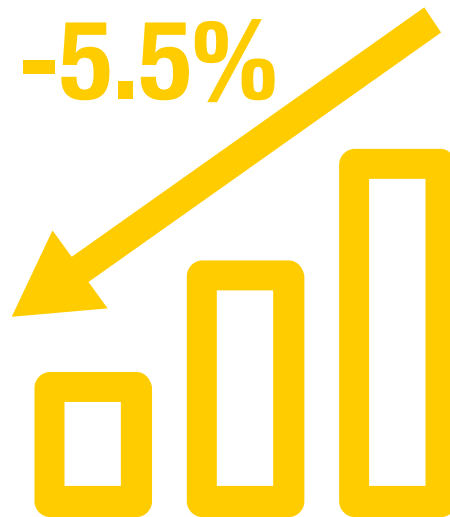
**A vote for Plaid Cymru in
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A vote for Plaid Cymru in the General Election on 12 December will be a vote for Wales to stay inside the European Union and build a prosperous future.

Westminster does not work for Wales. As Wales' leading party of Remain, Plaid Cymru is united in its aim of ensuring Wales remains a member of the European Union. We are campaigning to give the decision back to the people in a referendum.



No form of Brexit would be good for Wales. It would devastate the livelihoods of thousands of our people. The Tories' plan to take Wales out of the Single Market and the Customs Union will hit the Welsh economy hard. The Government's own forecasts suggest it will result in **a slow-down in growth of at least -5.5% by 2030.**

In this election Plaid Cymru is campaigning for policies that will directly improve the lives of Welsh families, tackle the climate and biodiversity crisis, boost our economy, schools and health service, provide free personal care for older people, and lift 50,000 Welsh children out of poverty.

All these plans will be much more difficult to put into action if Wales is dragged out of the EU by a hard-right wing Westminster government.

While Westminster politicians are deadlocked over Brexit, Wales is being left behind. It's time for change in Wales. It's time to vote Plaid Cymru.



The future, it's us.

Our Five Key Priorities For Wales:

01

Welsh Green Jobs Revolution

Create tens of thousands of new jobs throughout Wales by kick-starting a multi-billion investment programme in renewable energy, transport infrastructure and digital technology, with the goal of making Wales a carbon and single-use plastic free nation by 2030.

02

Caring for Everyone

Free social care for the elderly and other vulnerable citizens through a new National Health and Social Care Service, with an additional 1,000 new doctors, 5,000 new nurses, and 100 new NHS dentists offering seamless access to health and care for everyone throughout Wales.





03

A Fair Deal for Families

Universal free childcare for 40 hours a week, and a new £35 a week payment for every child in low income families, lifting 50,000 children in Wales out of poverty. Plus £300m extra for schools and colleges to give our children the best start in life.

04

Action on Housing

Major investment in environmentally sustainable affordable homes and rent relief for people who pay more than 30% of their income on rent.

05

Combating Crime

Create a Welsh justice system, devolve policing and create a new crime prevention fund to recruit 1,600 extra police officers, at least two for every community in Wales, to keep us safe.

A photograph of Adam Price AM, a Welsh politician, speaking at a public event. He is wearing a dark blue suit, a light blue shirt, and a red patterned tie. He is gesturing with his right hand while holding a white mug in his left. The background is blurred, showing other people and warm lighting.

OUR VISION
Why we're leading
Wales to stay in the EU
-
Adam Price AM



In this third general election in just four years we are offered a poisoned chalice between two divided Westminster parties. One is led by a leader who is resolutely dishonest on Brexit, and the other by one who has sadly proven honestly clueless. And both are advised by public schoolboys who see politics as some kind of game.

So rather than being about them, let's make this election about us, about our ambition for Wales. We can break the pattern of a century of elections in which Wales has overwhelmingly backed Westminster parties.

After all, what has been the return on that investment? We're at the wrong end of every league table. We are at the end of a long queue for Government investment. We have a worse funding settlement and fewer of the economic levers over tax and borrowing that have been given to Scotland or Northern Ireland. Indeed, if Wales enjoyed the same level of funding as Scotland we would receive an additional £1.5 billion a year.

Look at the way Scotland and its needs and priorities have shot to the top of the political agenda because of the power and the prominence of the SNP. Here is an almighty lesson for us in Wales. If we vote for Plaid Cymru, then our country, its problems, and its needs will be treated with the respect they deserve.

There is so much in Wales that needs fixing. Child poverty is rising, life expectancy is falling, our transport infrastructure is failing, homelessness is at crisis proportions.

We can solve these problems, but not by voting Labour who are in Government in Cardiff Bay, and have failed us for two decades. And certainly, not by voting for the Conservatives, who are in power in Westminster and have failed us with a decade of austerity.



We can solve it by voting for ourselves, by sending Plaid Cymru MPs to Westminster in greater numbers than ever in our history.

They will fight for a final say referendum so we can avoid a bad Brexit deal. Whether it's a Tory Brexit or a Labour Brexit it would destroy our economic future.

Our MPs are known for punching above their weight. They have tirelessly stood up to the Westminster establishment – and put Wales first.

Because that's what Plaid Cymru always does. Our country, our communities, and the best interests of our nation are always our first and foremost priority. With Johnson and Corbyn, all we get is more Westminster chaos. Plaid Cymru is campaigning to end Brexit once and for all through a People's Vote.

I believe that for all the noise and clamour of the campaign, this is the election in which Wales will find its collective voice as a nation.

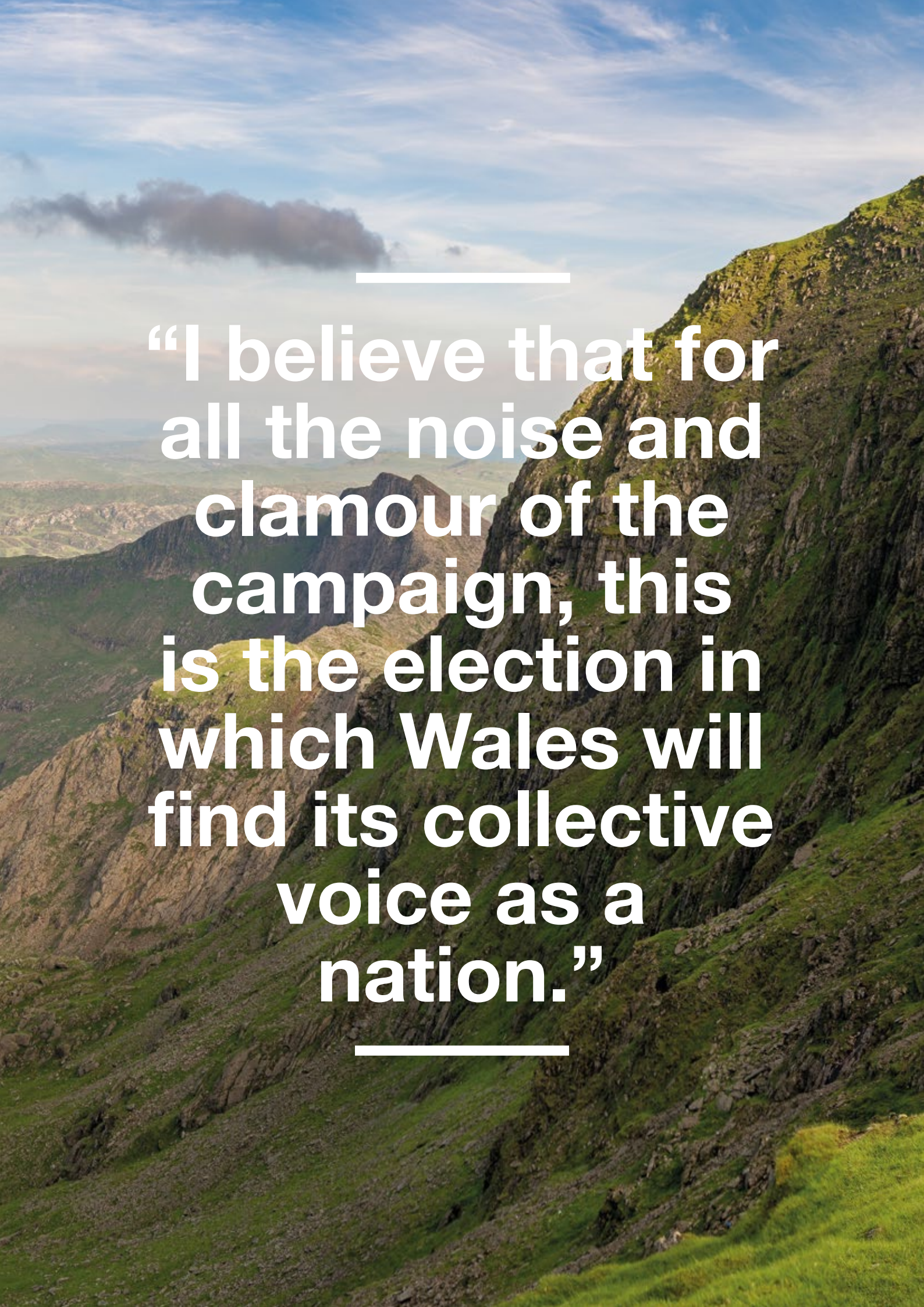
We say: Wales, it's us!

But we also say: Europe, it's us!

Now is our time.

A portrait of a middle-aged man with short, dark, slightly graying hair and blue eyes. He is wearing a blue suit jacket over a white shirt. The background is a solid, bright yellow. Overlaid on the lower half of the image is a black rectangular box containing yellow text.

**“We’re ready
to take this
fight to
Westminster”**



“I believe that for all the noise and clamour of the campaign, this is the election in which Wales will find its collective voice as a nation.”



A Final Say Referendum

Plaid Cymru has long campaigned for a People's Vote to end the Brexit crisis, to safeguard Wales's place in Europe and the thousands of jobs that depend upon our EU membership.

The Tories have wasted three years on their failed Brexit project and have consistently refused to give people a final say.

The Tory Deal

Plaid Cymru strongly opposes Boris Johnson's catastrophic Brexit deal. It takes us on a trajectory out of the Single Market and Customs Union. The Government's own forecasts, made in January 2018, suggest it **would lead to a slowdown in growth for the UK of -5.5% after 15 years outside the European Union.** For Wales this would likely be worse since our economy has a higher reliance on exports to the EU.

It is a **blind Brexit**, giving no certainty about what will happen after the transition period, which will be negotiated from a position of extreme weakness.

It fails to guarantee workers' rights and environmental standards – with assurances placed in the non-binding Political Declaration rather than the legally binding Withdrawal Agreement. **We cannot trust Boris Johnson with our rights.**

It puts a **hard border in the Irish Sea**, creating chaos in Holyhead and Fishguard. Our western ports are of primary strategic importance for our nation – Plaid Cymru will do everything in our power to protect them.

It **denies a say for our Senedd.** Despite having consistently voted in favour of remaining in the Single Market and Customs Union, and supporting a People's Vote, our parliament has been ignored throughout.

Prolonging Brexit Chaos

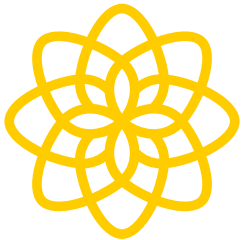
The Tory deal is, in effect, **no-deal by another route.** It means that we will be stuck debating Brexit for the next twelve months. We will then face another **no-deal Brexit cliff-edge in December 2020** if no free trade agreement is agreed, with all the economic harm we know that will cause to Wales.



Leaving without a deal, with tariffs imposed on our lamb exports, would seriously impact on Welsh agriculture. It would also put at risk vital supplies of medicines and fresh food. The catastrophe of a crash out Brexit is still in play and safeguarding the welfare of the people of Wales is Plaid Cymru's number one priority.

- Brexit would lead to a severe reduction in the growth of the Welsh economy. Remaining in the EU will give the economy certainty it has lacked for three years.
- Brexit would lead to huge import tariffs – as high as 84% on cattle carcasses, and 48% on lamb. Remaining in the EU would allow farmers to maintain their current markets without disruption.
- Brexit will lead to huge uncertainty for the thousands of EU citizens in our communities in Wales, and to those from Wales living in the rest of Europe. Remaining in the EU means equality – welcoming EU citizens to Wales and giving our young people the chance to live, work and study across the EU.

The Tories have wasted three years pursuing damaging deals which show their complete disregard for Wales. It is now time to draw a line under their mess – by stopping Brexit.



Plaid Cymru's Record

In the wake of the 2016 referendum, Plaid Cymru worked hard to understand the potential impacts of Brexit and took the initiative to work with the Welsh Government to produce a common policy aimed at mitigating the worst effects of leaving the EU.

Our work recognised:

- Two thirds of Welsh exports go to EU countries.
- Our success in attracting foreign investment is largely based on access to the EU single market of more than 500 million customers.
- 200,000 Welsh jobs rely on our trade with Europe being frictionless.

Consequently, Plaid Cymru called for:

- Full membership of the EU Single Market for goods, services and capital – including our key agricultural and food products.
- Wales to remain in the Customs Union to allow goods to be traded freely with more than 80 countries around the world.



As Plaid Cymru's representative on the House of Commons Brexit Select Committee, Arfon's Hywel Williams worked tirelessly to scrutinise the British Government's shambolic handling of the negotiating process. He has ensured that Welsh interests have been at the forefront of Committee members' minds, especially concerns over Welsh industry and agriculture, as well as the impact on Welsh ports of leaving the Customs Union and Single Market.

The EU Single Market and Customs Union are both essential for our home-grown employers and for attracting inward investment and job creation and this would be the minimum we need to protect Wales' economic interests. That is why we voted for them when the opportunity arose in Westminster. At the same time, we in Plaid Cymru stated that this would still be worse than staying inside the EU. Even though we might be able to negotiate a position where Wales could remain in the Single Market and Customs Union, being outside the EU would mean we would have no say over the future decisions about the way they develop.

Indeed, since the referendum, industries and jobs have suffered as a consequence of Brexit and the current climate of uncertainty. Remaining in the EU will enable us to safeguard jobs and having easy access to Europe will encourage important foreign companies to invest in Wales.





Trade Deals

The idea that forging new trade deals once out of the EU would be easy was another of the unrealistic promises made during the referendum. Plaid Cymru warned from the very beginning that the British Government would find it impossible to roll over the 40 trade agreements from which it currently benefits through its membership of the EU. So far, the UK has only been able to reach 18 deals that represent a small proportion of total UK trade.

As a state with a population of 67 million, Britain will not be in a position to call the shots in negotiations with the US, with its population of 328 million. A trade deal with the US, if prioritised over the EU, will inevitably involve the UK following some US regulations.

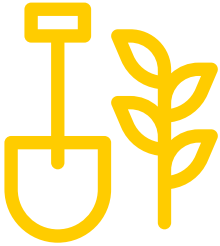
Plaid Cymru will work hard to ensure that any future trade policy will uphold social, health and environmental protections. We will never support deals that weaken the standards and rules on food safety and medicines.

While Plaid's Carmarthen East and Dinefwr MP Jonathan Edwards brought attention to the important issue of agricultural tariffs in the event of no-deal, the British Government had indicated it would follow a slash and burn approach in the event of no-deal, seeing vital protections removed.

At every opportunity we will fight any attempt to open up the NHS to privatisation in future trade deals.

Wales' future is better placed within the EU with its high regulation standards, and its population of over 500 million people.

Plaid Cymru will ensure that all the national parliaments of the UK are consulted throughout the negotiations on future trade deals, and that the ratification process includes endorsement by the Senedd, the Scottish Parliament and the Northern Ireland Assembly.



Agriculture

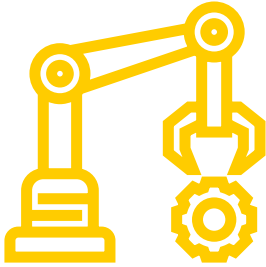
Brexit has serious implications for Welsh farmers. In Wales, more than half of a farmer's income comes from the direct payments received through the EU's Common Agricultural Policy.

If we leave the EU, the Welsh Labour Government proposes to follow the UK Conservative Government by phasing out direct payments to farmers and establishing a new environmental land management system. Meanwhile, farmers in Scotland, Northern Ireland and the rest of the EU 27 will retain direct payments, creating an unlevel playing field for Welsh farmers and undermining the viability of their businesses.

Ceredigion's Ben Lake strongly made the case to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs that in any future agriculture funding arrangement each country in the UK should have an equal say on the total amount of money allocated to farming.

Meanwhile, if we were to leave the EU without a deal, Welsh farmers would face crippling tariffs on selling their products in their main market which is the rest of the EU. It is vital that we protect the Welsh family farm through remaining in the EU – vital for our rural communities, economy, environment and culture.





Manufacturing

Uncertainty around Brexit is already impacting on manufacturing. To give three examples from just one sector, more than 1,700 job losses have been announced at Ford in Bridgend and another 220 at Schaeffler and 95 at Calsonic Kansei car components plants in Llanelli.

There has also been a serious decline in inward investment since the 2016 referendum, with Wales bottom of the league table. The average fall-off in incoming new projects across the UK was 16.5%, but for Wales it was 46%. Nissan is abandoning its plans to build one of its flagship vehicles in Sunderland. The electronics giants Sony and Panasonic are moving their headquarters from London to Amsterdam and Honda is closing a factory at Swindon, which will affect up to a dozen major suppliers in the Welsh automotive industry. Meanwhile Airbus, which employs 6,000 people in Broughton in north-east Wales and another 500 at Newport, has announced that Brexit will threaten future investment decisions and job prospects.

Citizens' Rights

Brexit is not merely an economic problem – it is ripping away rights from millions of people. Thousands of people from all over Europe have honoured our country by choosing to live with us, to contribute to our society, to become Welsh.

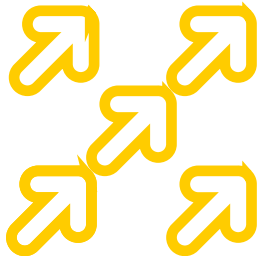
They were promised from the beginning that their circumstances would not change as a result of Brexit. However, the Tories' "EU Settlement Scheme" treats people like second class citizens, forcing millions of people across the UK to apply to stay in their own homes. The British Government's position means that anyone who does not apply by the deadline (which is 31st December 2020 in case of no deal, or 30th June 2021 in case of a deal) will not have the right to stay in the UK and could face deportation.

Plaid Cymru have led the campaign both in Westminster and in Brussels on the right of the people of Wales to keep their status as Welsh Europeans, in securing continuing European citizenship after Brexit.

In 2018, the House of Commons backed a Plaid Cymru motion to allow continuing European citizenship after we leave the EU, a call that was also supported by organisations such as Open Britain, Best for Britain and the New European newspaper. Our MEP Jill Evans also secured widespread support in the European Parliament for the proposal.



Plaid Cymru would change the Settled Status application system into a registration system, ensuring that all EU citizens who are resident in the UK before exit day should have the right of permanent residence, and that every person who is entitled to settled status will have the same rights.



A Welsh Migration System

Migrants make a valuable and important contribution to Welsh life, both economically and culturally. Migration is important for many of our key sectors. For example, migrants make an important contribution to our NHS. Thirty per cent of our doctors received their training abroad, with 6% being trained in EU countries. Remaining in the EU is the best way of protecting EU citizens' right to work here.

This Westminster Government is proposing unworkable and illogical immigration policies which will hurt the Welsh economy. Instead, we need a rational immigration policy that works for Wales, where students and job creators can come, but wages aren't undercut.

In government in Wales, Plaid Cymru will create a Welsh Migration Advisory Service so that we can have a system that plugs skills gaps, especially in agriculture and social care, and protects our health service from staff shortages.

Plaid Cymru will also seek the devolution of migration policy, so that Wales can set its own migration quota according to our own needs, with greater flexibility, for example, in processing entrepreneur visas.

Where there are identified skills shortages, we should be actively recruiting across the EU. In addition, international students must be taken out of net migration targets.

Staying in the EU will enable our students and our researchers to study anywhere across Europe, which is in the best interests of Wales and the UK as a whole.

It is crucial that all migrants are treated with dignity and regard for their basic human rights. We want to protect the rights of migrant workers and combat all forms of labour exploitation and forced labour.

Plaid Cymru has consistently called for the rights of all EU citizens in the UK and UK citizens in the EU to be legally protected.



Like other EU countries, we must assume our responsibilities and provide aid and support for those fleeing war or persecution. We must take a more humane approach and show greater solidarity with refugees, including those crossing the Mediterranean in precarious circumstances. We will lead the call for an EU migration policy based on solidarity, which means moving towards a migration system based on a fair allocation of asylum seekers across all Member States.

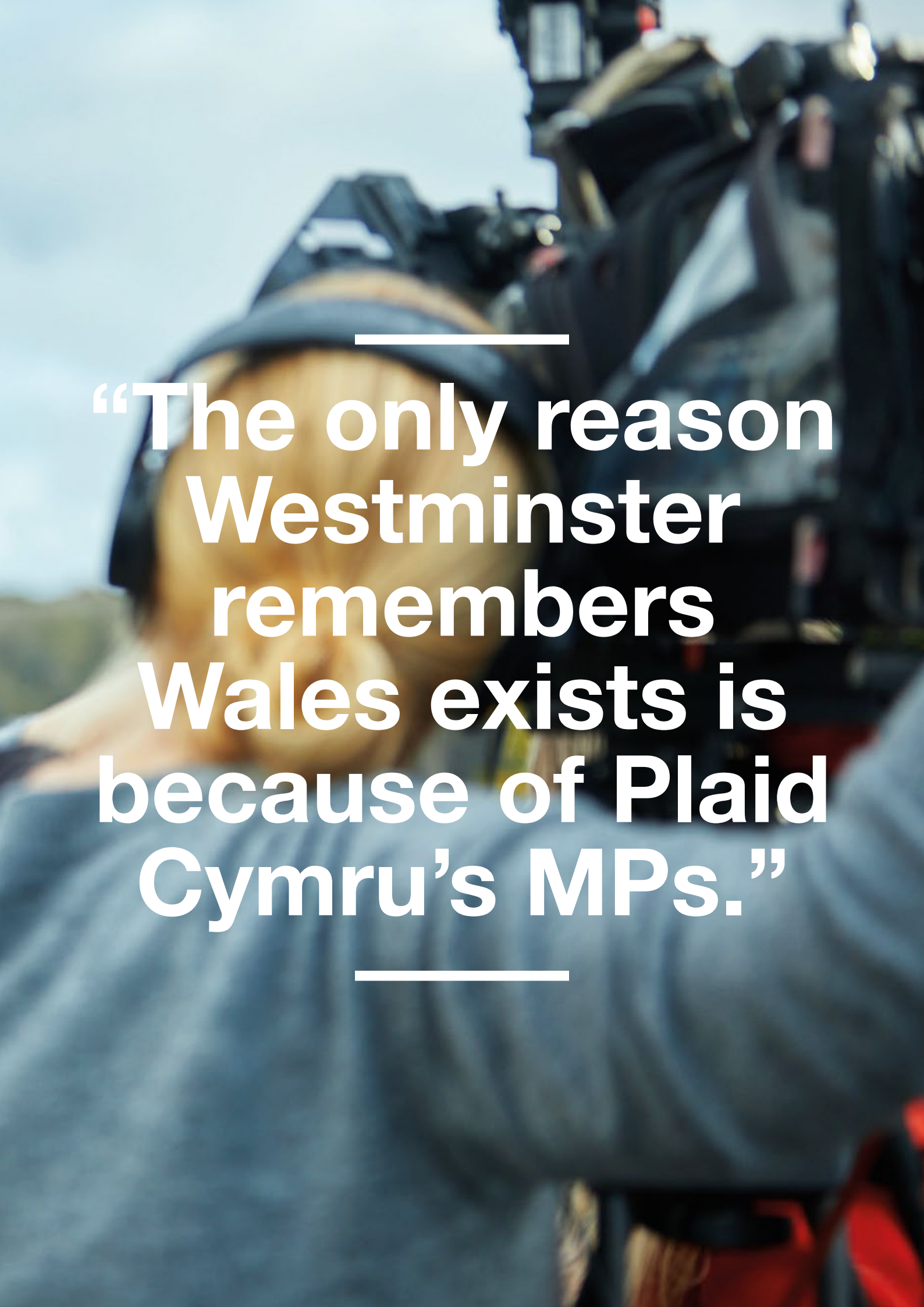
Plaid Cymru wants Wales to be a nation of sanctuary for refugees fleeing war and oppression and will help refugees and asylum seekers integrate into Welsh society.



**The evidence is clear
- Brexit would be
deeply damaging to
Wales' communities.**

**That is why we are
campaigning for a Final
Say referendum in
which Plaid Cymru will
campaign to Remain.**





**“The only reason
Westminster
remembers
Wales exists is
because of Plaid
Cymru’s MPs.”**

WELSH GREEN JOBS REVOLUTION

We understand that climate change, together with the global collapse of biodiversity, is the defining challenge of our time. The climate crisis, destruction of nature and overuse of natural resources threaten the foundations of humanity's well-being. With declining biodiversity, polluted air and accelerating climate crisis, the time to act is now.

Wales has the natural resources to become a world leader in renewable technology and address the biggest global challenge of our time. If we are serious about tackling climate change, we need to start investing in the green economy and building the workforce we need to make it a success by investing in our people.

That is why Plaid Cymru will implement a Green Jobs Revolution which will ensure that Wales makes the transition to becoming 100% self-sufficient in renewable energy by 2030. Our Renewables Revolution will create tens of thousands of highly skilled jobs in Wales over the next ten years.

Carmarthen East's Jonathan Edwards and Ceredigion's Ben Lake have campaigned tirelessly with the Traws Link Cymru campaign to create a national rail corridor starting with Carmarthen to Aberystwyth.

As a result of the Budget deal between Plaid Cymru and the Welsh Labour Government, Mott MacDonald was commissioned to undertake a feasibility study on the project. It calculated that if the rail line was up and running by 2024, it would generate 370,000 trips. That would rise to 425,000 by 2027 and 489,000 by 2037.



Welsh Green Jobs Revolution

We are demanding that the UK Government allocate an additional 1 per cent of GDP per year to capital investment over the next ten years. In Wales this would allow us to invest an extra £15 billion through a Welsh Green Jobs Revolution to shift the economy away from London. In addition we will be pressing the Treasury to allow the Welsh Government to borrow on its account up to £5 billion for capital investment.

In Wales this will allow us to invest a total of £20 billion in our green jobs revolution. These sums will allow us to create tens of thousands highly skilled green collar jobs, allowing Wales to be a trailblazer in the fight to tackle the climate emergency.

Wales Fund for the Future

This investment capacity will allow us to establish a National Reconstruction Fund to rebuild Wales. An incoming Plaid Cymru government in 2021 will embark upon the biggest programme of reconstruction our nation has seen since devolution. We have a comprehensive plan for national infrastructure and green investment designed to reverse decades of decline.

This momentous task will take a generation, but we must start now in order to ensure that we leave a safe environment for our children.





Welsh Green Jobs Revolution

Projects could include:

Communications Infrastructure

- Creating a publicly-owned Welsh Broadband Infrastructure Company to guarantee access to full-fibre broadband to every home and business in Wales by 2025.
- Electrification of all major rail lines by 2030. We will complete the planned electrification of the South Wales Valley Lines. The next line to be electrified should be the North Wales Coast Line.
- Building a super-Metro for south-east Wales with new stations acting as development hubs.
- Building the new Swansea Bay and Western Valleys Metro, and reopening rail services for the Amman, Swansea, Neath and Dulais Valleys.
- Developing a metro for north-east Wales and relocate the Chester Transport for Wales Depot to the north of Wales.
- Creating a trans-Wales railway: connecting Wales' coastal communities by re-opening the Carmarthen to Aberystwyth line together with a second phase linking our communities from north to south.
- A Cross-Rail for the Valleys, from Porth to Pontypool.
- Expanding the Traws Cymru bus network with high-quality coaches powered by renewable sources of energy.
- Transport for Wales will create a new publicly owned regional bus company for southern Wales. This will amalgamate Cardiff and Newport Bus with First Cymru to provide additional inter-city bus services between Newport, Cardiff and Swansea and additional cross valley services.

Green Energy Infrastructure

- Tidal Lagoons for Swansea Bay, Cardiff and Colwyn Bay.
- Building an Ynys Môn offshore windfarm.
- Building an Usk barrage.
- A network of local energy grids for Wales.
- Amending land use planning legislation to enshrine a fast-track route for community-owned energy schemes such as hydro-electric power projects, with a presumption in favour of development.



Welsh Green Jobs Revolution

Green Social and Economic Infrastructure

- A comprehensive £5bn Greener Homes programme to improve the energy efficiency of housing in Wales and reduce fuel poverty.
- Build 20,000 green social homes.
- Creating a new Urban Development Corporation for the Valleys and for the Arfor (coastal) region of rural west and north-west Wales.
- Designating town centres across Wales as Opportunity Zones, with tax relief and capital investment to turn them into engines of localised green development rather than symbols of decay.
- We will establish Employment Action Zones in rural and industrial areas with high unemployment where we will offer special exemption for employer National Insurance and enhanced tax credits for Research and Development.

Public Sector Procurement

More environmentally friendly jobs can be created and secured within the Welsh public sector by promoting more localised procurement policies. Far too much money is being spent buying goods and services from non-Welsh contractors. Huge multinational companies are doing work that could be done by local companies.

Plaid Cymru will fight to ensure that billions of pounds in public sector contracts are spent in Wales, protecting jobs and retaining investment locally. As part of new public procurement regulations we will ensure that all public sector workers in Wales and those in the private sector, who work for business in receipt of public money, earn a real living wage. Plaid Cymru opposes the use of Zero Hours Contracts and has led calls at the Senedd to ban them in Wales.



CARING FOR EVERYONE

Free Social Care at the Point of Need

In the face of devastating on-going cuts and an increase in demand, our social services are struggling to cope, and it is the vulnerable people who use them who are suffering.

Free Social Care at the point of need, delivered by a new and seamless National Health and Social Care Service, will ensure that our older people are treated with the dignity they deserve. We estimate this will cost the Welsh Government an extra £300 million a year, which in the context of an overall Welsh budget of £17 billion, is an achievable priority.

Social care will be transformed into a service that puts people's independence above the needs of bureaucracy, meaning that we aim to make people's lives worth living rather than merely keeping people alive. We will place far greater emphasis on investment in early intervention and preventative health and care services to ensure people can be kept healthy

and independent. This is the best way to relieve the pressure on the NHS.

We will establish parity of pay and terms and conditions between Social Care and Health Care workers. The ambition of health and social care services working side by side cannot be achieved with the current inequality. We want our sick, elderly and vulnerable people to be treated and cared for effectively and with dignity. This can only happen if the social care workforce is well-trained, resourced and motivated to do so. Planning for a skilled and sustainable workforce is therefore crucial.

The Older Generation

As a party, we recognise the positive economic impact of older people upon the economy and will promote Wales as an older-person friendly location. Plaid Cymru will protect our pensioners from the stealth cuts that have been inflicted on our pensioners over the past decade.



Caring For Everyone

Plaid Cymru recognises the importance of older people to Welsh society and to our economy. Plaid Cymru campaigned for the end of the compulsory retirement age, and will support older people to stay in employment, or find work, if they wish to do so. We will work with third sector organisations and the police to better protect older people from exploitative scams.

We support the Women Against State Pension Injustice (WASPI) campaign and would provide compensation to those women who have lost out from an ill communicated and ill thought through policy.

Plaid Cymru supports calls by the UK Mineworkers Pension Association to get the 50-50 split of pension surplus renegotiated. We will continue to demand a fairer deal for former miners to access the money that is rightfully theirs.

Ben Lake has been one of the strongest and most dedicated voices for WASPI women over the last two years, both in local campaigns in Ceredigion and parliamentary campaigns in Westminster.

We will protect the benefits given to pensioners and will maintain the triple lock on state pensions. We will require the BBC to reverse the cuts to free TV licences. The free bus pass that allows older people to keep in touch with friends and maintain their independence will be protected and with our investment in public transport will become more important. We will also support keeping public toilets open to allow older people, and others, to visit town centres and other places of interest and maintain their independence.

More Doctors, Nurses and Dentists

Today's Welsh NHS is characterized by a shortage of doctors, nurses and dentists. The number of doctors per head in Wales is lower than in Scotland and is one of the lowest in Europe, despite our higher ill-health statistics.



Caring For Everyone

In government, Plaid Cymru will train and recruit an additional 1,000 doctors, 5,000 nurses, and 100 dentists for the Welsh NHS. We will increase the number of home-grown Welsh doctors, nurses and dentists through our investment in medical schools and training, including accelerating development of a medical school in Bangor. In hard-to-recruit areas and specialisms we will offer financial incentives to new doctors in exchange for service. This will also enable us to ensure that we protect our local services and improve access to care in the community.

The Welsh NHS makes too much use of Agency staff. This spending increased from £60m in 2013-14 to £150m in 2018-19. We will aim to bring this amount down to the 2013-14 levels, freeing up an extra £90m to contribute to our recruitment programme.





Caring For Everyone

Opposing Privatisation

There is no place for profiteering in our health service. Plaid Cymru rejects the marketisation and privatisation of the NHS and will continue to oppose any moves in that direction from governments, whether in Westminster or Cardiff Bay.

Thanks to pressure from Plaid Cymru and trade unions, the Welsh Labour Government was forced to accept that Betsi Cadwaldr Health Board was planning to privatise dialysis services and even transfer NHS nurses into the private sector. They dropped the dialysis plans but came up with a new scheme to privatise pharmacies. We are continuing to lead the fight against privatisation.

In the event of leaving the EU, we will strongly oppose the inclusion of the Welsh NHS within any future trade deals with the USA, if necessary, by promoting legislation in the Senedd.

Role of Local Government

Plaid Cymru recognises the essential work of local government in providing vital services to the community. From child protection to economic development, from the maintenance of highways to education, it is Local Authorities that are instrumental in delivering a significant range of services. We will continue to support the proper funding of council services and will continue to rebalance the Welsh budget towards preventative, locally-delivered interventions across health and social services, education and support for families.

Mental Health Services

Plaid Cymru strongly believes that Mental Health should have parity of esteem with other NHS services. We will provide for a 5% increase in mental health expenditure every year for the next decade, doubling the amount we spend on a cumulative basis.

We will establish a 24/7 Mental Health Crisis service for those in acute distress, that will work alongside the emergency services. We will continue to support whole population approaches towards improving the mental health of everyone and preventing illness through better education in schools, access to green spaces, and the tackling of stigma and discrimination experienced by so many.



Caring For Everyone

People with mental health problems should not be forced to travel to outsourced and often inappropriate residential facilities. We will thus seek to establish Welsh based specialist services for the small numbers who need acute inpatient treatment, building the facilities that are conducive to recovery.

We will invest in improving community mental health services, including creating more counsellors so that, where appropriate, alternatives to medication are available in all communities.

Some people with mental health problems also have problematic substance use issues. Mental health professionals should be trained to deal with these inter-related and co-occurring conditions.

We will restore to Wales the specialist mother and baby unit for mothers suffering from severe mental illness that was removed by Cardiff and Vale Health Board in 2013.

Cancer

Wales continues to have lower cancer survival rates than most countries in Europe. Diagnosis at an earlier stage is essential in improving long term survival. Multi-disciplinary diagnostic testing that is currently only available in south Wales will be extended to the rest of the country. We will also provide screening programmes where the clinical evidence shows these will be of benefit.

We remain committed to ensuring cancer patients have a key worker to support them at all stages of their cancer journey. We will develop cancer pathways that enable speedier treatment, particularly for those at greater clinical risk.

Rural Healthcare

We will improve access to rural healthcare by providing consultant-led Accident and Emergency and Maternity services within one hour's reach of rural and peripheral communities. We will reform NHS planning guidance to avoid penalising rural hospitals. Clinical networks will enable consultants working predominantly in smaller hospitals to retain sufficient skillsets.



Caring For Everyone

NHS Rehabilitation Service

We will create a Community NHS Rehabilitation Service, bringing together GPs, Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, District and Community Nurses, Mental Health Counsellors, and Patient Advocates. It will be responsible for follow-up treatment and ensuring that other services such as social security and local authorities play their part in helping patients. The service will:

- Provide rehabilitation for patients following treatment, including prevention of further ill-health, and ensuring a person can live as independently as possible.
- Ensure the optimal management of chronic conditions.
- Tackle causes of continuing ill health such as access to income support and poor housing.

Public Health

Plaid Cymru has already led the way on public health measures in Wales, campaigning successfully for a ban on smoking in public places and minimum alcohol pricing. Until recently we were ridiculed for suggesting a sugary drinks tax, but now this is policy across the UK. We will further explore how the tax system can be used to promote public health, for example through introducing a minimum price per unit of alcohol, and through imposing additional taxation on other potentially harmful products.

We will establish an independent, publicly funded National Institute for Public Health policy to advise on all public health matters without being influenced by vested interests. This body will also be responsible for supporting schools in educating children about healthy lifestyles.

We will reform planning law to provide greater protection for green spaces in urban areas, expanding the minimum requirements for play area provision in planning developments, and banning the sale of playing fields for housing unless those fields are replaced on a like for like basis.

We will increase spending on active travel routes and promote walking and cycling. We will ensure all schools meet the minimum requirement of providing children with the opportunity to do two hours of physical activity each week.



Caring For Everyone

We will prevent local authorities from cutting access to sports and leisure facilities, or using community asset transfer of such facilities where doing so would put the access to such facilities at risk.

Drugs Misuse

Drug misuse can have a debilitating effect on people and their loved ones. However, the current hardline approach to drugs criminalises citizens who have an addiction but does nothing to help them overcome their problems. It also criminalises people who may use drugs medicinally or recreationally but who do no harm to others.

Rather than focusing services on all drug users, we believe we should focus on the small number of people with dependency and seek to address the underlying causes of their misuse via Checkpoint Cymru.

Drugs have been decriminalised in Portugal since 2001, enabling a public health approach to drug users; dissuading new drug users and encouraging dependent drug users to enter treatment whilst focusing police resources on those who profit from the drugs trade.

By sending the message that drug users are not criminals, the reform has contributed towards greater tolerance and integration of drug users into society. It has reduced the stigma around drug use and has allowed more users to access the treatment they need.

Moreover, drug use in Portugal has decreased since decriminalisation. Its drugs prevalence is below the EU average and, for example, it now has the lowest rate of cannabis use in the EU. Rather than turning more people towards drugs, decriminalisation has allowed more people to receive the treatment they need.

For these reasons, Plaid Cymru is calling for a National Commission on reforming drug law.



Caring For Everyone

Accountability of NHS Managers

We will make NHS management accountable by establishing a new regulatory body for approved NHS managers. This will be responsible for setting and improving professional standards for managers within the NHS. We will give the new regulatory body the power to strike managers off the register in the event of serious errors or misconduct. We will also establish a new national whistleblowing procedure and enhanced protection for whistleblowers in the NHS.

Charter for Patients' Rights

We will introduce a Patients' Rights Charter to specify minimum standards of service for patients, including maximum waiting times before patients receive treatment.

Research

We will invest in the infrastructure needed to make the Welsh NHS a world class environment for conducting clinical trials. This will help us to recruit doctors and scientists, as well as ensuring that our patients get access to the latest and most innovative treatments. We will continue to push for Welsh participation in European Research Networks, and to ensure that Wales receives its fair share of research funding.

Rigorous Professional Qualifications

Qualifications for professionals working in the NHS should be rigorous and compatible with EU standards. They should not be watered down by the threat of a de-regulated workforce. We will press for free movement of health professionals throughout the EU.

Clinical Trials

We support the publication of all clinical trials to ensure transparency in medical research. We will support efforts to increase the robustness of EU licensing of medicines, and stronger regulation against false health claims being made in product marketing. We will be vigilant against any attempt to reduce these standards in any post Brexit environment.



Caring For Everyone

A Paperless NHS

We will use technological developments to underpin modernised models of care to deliver better outcomes for patients as well as increasing efficient use of finance and human resources. Patient records will be fully electronic within the next period of Government and every patient will have access to a Digital Health Service which will offer an app for appointment booking, contacting specialists over a secure messaging service, and viewing lab results.



A FAIR DEAL FOR FAMILIES

Lifting Children out of Poverty

Every child deserves to have the best start in life. Plaid Cymru want our children to live in warm homes, have enough food, to receive high-quality education and to be happy.

The reality is that Wales has the highest rates of child poverty of any UK nation, with one in three children living in poverty. The Institute for Fiscal Studies have indicated that if nothing changes, this figure is likely to increase to 40% of Welsh children by 2020, with welfare reform a significant factor. This is a damning indictment of the impact of the Conservatives' cruel austerity agenda and consequent cuts to welfare, together with twenty years of inefficient governing of Wales by Welsh Labour.

Beyond the statistics, poverty has real consequences for the lives of children in Wales today. Children are being forced to go to school hungry and to bed cold, resulting in a negative impact on their health and education. Poverty can have lasting impacts long into adulthood

such as increased risk of homelessness, lower earning potential and greater likelihood of limiting illnesses.

The time has come to take bold action. If we do not, we risk a whole generation of Welsh children in low-income families being left behind. In Government, Plaid Cymru will introduce a comprehensive plan to tackle child poverty which will include:

- A new £35 a week payment for every child in low income families, lifting 50,000 children in Wales out of poverty.
- Free Care and Education for all 1-3 year olds – we will provide free full-day early years childcare and early years education to all children between 1-3 years old. We will offer seamless care from early years into school. Our aim will be to use this first stage of education to ensure that all Welsh children become bilingual.
- We will impose statutory targets for reducing child poverty.



A Fair Deal For Families

Early years interventions are vital. We will ensure that coordinated national and local multi-agency early intervention strategies will create a level playing field for each child, whatever their background or circumstances. Plaid Cymru will use schools as family support hubs with multi-agency early intervention for vulnerable children and their families from birth.

Raising Education Standards

We will raise education standards and create more opportunities for our children by tackling the funding emergency faced by our schools that sees £324 less being spent in real terms per pupil during 2018-19 compared with the corresponding figures in 2009-10.

Plaid Cymru will provide an extra £300million a year for our schools and colleges, allowing for long term planning. It will enable us to expand capital investment in new school-community hubs, together with developing new Welsh medium schools and 3-14 and 3-19 through-schools where there is local demand.

We will make sure resources reach the frontline in an effective and timely manner, moving away from specific grants, and last-minute allocations. We will work with childcare providers, such as Mudiad Meithrin, to ensure that sufficient Welsh language childcare is available in all parts of Wales.

Teachers inspiring children in our schools are crucial to raising standards and producing a prosperous and fair Wales. We will encourage a close connection between teacher and pupil and give it space in which to flourish. We must pursue all avenues in order to promote and protect this important relationship, removing all unnecessary interference. Good teaching makes all the difference.

However, we are currently facing a crisis in our education system with an estimated one in three teachers quitting the classroom within their first five years. Therefore, a Plaid Cymru Government will implement a series of measures to give teachers and auxiliary staff a supportive workplace, allowing them to make their relationship with their pupils the primary focus of their work. This will be done by:

- Fully utilising devolved powers over work conditions in the classroom to ensure teachers are allowed to dedicate their time to teaching and inspiring their pupils, making the needs of the child and young person central to all they do.



A Fair Deal For Families

- Cutting bureaucracy and removing all unnecessary interventions that disrupt the essential child/teacher relationship, concentrating on meaningful support, monitoring and accountability where necessary following a full review of current practice.
- Creating a professionalised support staff network with adequate rates of pay and clear career progression.
- Ensuring that we attract and retain world class teachers by raising the formal standing of teaching as a profession through introducing mandatory continuous professional development.
- Creating a National Cooperative Agency for Supply Teachers which will ensure they receive the same entitlement to training and standards as classroom teachers.

The development of the new curriculum presents exciting opportunities to transform our education system. However, successfully delivering a new way of working requires a great deal of preparation and support. Plaid Cymru will ensure that teachers have the time and resources they need to prepare, and access to professional development opportunities to ensure that the curriculum is implemented effectively. We will ensure that we take the opportunity the new curriculum provides to foster a good understanding of mental health and well-being, including establishing physical education as a core element of the curriculum with more time earmarked for physical activity, as well as provision for lessons on healthy relationships, citizenship, children's rights and Welsh identity.

Higher Education

Plaid Cymru believes that higher education should be free for all, and we will continue to work towards this aim. Another guiding principle is our determination to address the long term brain drain of young people out of Wales. Forty per cent of all Welsh students left Wales in the past year.

Plaid Cymru will undertake a review of the funding offer for Welsh domiciled undergraduate and post-graduate students, in respect of both tuition fees and living costs.

We will provide a subsidy to students resident in Wales who wish to study in Wales. Target groups and those studying subjects vital to the Welsh economy and public goals will pay no tuition fees in Wales, including those taking up key healthcare posts, studying science, engineering and technology subjects and students from particularly challenging backgrounds.



A Fair Deal For Families

In addition, we will:

- Increase funding for degree apprentices in Wales
- Guarantee to replace EU funding which supported research in higher education in the event of Brexit
- Protect inward and outward student mobility post-Brexit, including participation in Erasmus+ or any successor schemes and cross-border study on the island of Ireland.

Further Education

Further Education colleges are a crucial link to expanding key skills and productivity for all. But they are underfunded, and college teachers and lecturers are not given the same level of support or pay as schoolteachers. We propose to increase college lecturer pay in Wales to ensure parity with schoolteachers in terms of base hourly pay.

Plaid Cymru will establish a paid student officer position for each college to ensure student unions are securely established in the FE sector. We propose making public transport free for all FE/6th form students and apprentices in Wales below age 21 in full time education or training.

Apprenticeships

Apprentices aged below 21 do not have the same access to support networks such as student voices. An apprenticeship should not just be considered an access point to employment, but an educational experience, with more uniformity than is currently the case.

We propose all apprentices under the age of 21 should be partnered with a Further Education college to ensure appropriate support, including access to college days or off-site training/education for key skills or other appropriate education choices.

ACTION ON HOUSING

Help for people in the rented sector

We support a new tax credit for people who pay more than 30% of their income on rent and utilities.

Renters in Wales have a bad deal: 37% of private renters in Wales earn less than £15,000, and almost half of private households in Wales spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs.

Everyone needs safe, stable and suitable housing to stay well, but in Wales, that is becoming the privilege of fewer people every year, due to soaring prices and limited public sector budgets.

This leaves over 100,000 households with very little to spend on basic living expenses like food, heating or transport. Rent is becoming more and more expensive while wages are stagnating.

Plaid Cymru will help those people by creating a new tax credit of up to £25 a week to households paying over 30% of their income on private rent.

Investment in Affordable Homes

Alongside the new tax credit, we need an overhaul of housing policy in Wales. The supply of new units of social housing remains lower than it was in the 1990s, most of the 1980s, and substantially lower than the second part of the 1970s. This reflects successive governments' lack of willingness to invest in new social housing over the period.



Action On Housing

A Plaid Cymru government in Wales will create a National Housing Company which will borrow against rents to build a new generation of public rental housing in Wales, with a target of achieving 20,000 new homes over five years. We will also support Local Authorities wishing to build new Council Housing. We will ensure that all new-build housing will be insulated to the highest standards and equipped with photovoltaics for electricity generation and solar water-heating.

Homelessness

The slashing of public provisions and benefits by consecutive Conservative Governments in Westminster, together with a policy of 'managed decline' by the Welsh Labour Government, has led to huge increases in homelessness. Across Britain, more than 12,300 people sleep on the streets each night, with a further 12,000 spending the night in cars, trains, buses or tents.

Homelessness increased by 63% in Wales between 2012 and 2017, with 10,373 households threatened by homelessness between 2018 and 2019. Plaid Cymru believe that no society can legitimately call itself civilised if a person must sleep on the street. Above all, tackling this problem is a question of political will.

We support the comprehensive and detailed plan produced by the homelessness charity Crisis which, if implemented would end homelessness and bring overall savings to UK public services of around £34.6 billion by 2041. In Wales it would entail savings of about £70 million a year.

Plaid Cymru will adopt a 'housing first' philosophy - as implemented in countries like Finland – to support those that are homeless. Recovery programmes are more successful after an individual has been housed. Being asked to be abstinent and/or sober whilst homeless prior to receiving housing is impractical.

We are committed to abolishing the archaic Vagrancy Act of 1824, a pre-Victorian law that makes homelessness a crime. Not only is fining or imprisoning those on the streets cruel, it leads to their being actively discouraged from engaging with the police for fear of enforcement measures being taken. This does not help anyone.



Action On Housing

We support an approach based on *Centrepaint's* key principles to tackle youth homelessness. There should be a 'single front door' for young people to have a consistent and reliable place to access help. We will ensure that agencies coordinate their activities to respond to young people at risk. Too often young people fall between the gaps of different services and agencies.

Plaid Cymru is fighting for a fairer benefit system that will take the cost of housing into account.

Planning

We will create an overarching strategic framework for planning that prioritises sustainable development and protects against environmentally damaging development. Our aim is a system that provides greater freedom for individuals to improve their own homes but less freedom for the large developers to ride roughshod over communities.

We will reform the Local Development Plan system to ensure that development is far more collaborative, involving communities at a far earlier stage in the process than at present. We will ensure the Welsh language is given greater prominence in the planning system, with all large developments being required to demonstrate a positive impact on the language.

We will create a Welsh-based Planning Inspectorate that is required to meet the needs of our communities. We will ensure fairness in the planning system through strengthening the rights of communities to speak and provide evidence to planning committees, and ensure that committees receive genuinely independent legal advice.



COMBATING CRIME

Devolution of Police and Justice

It is unacceptable that Wales is the only nation in these islands without powers over its policing and justice policies.

Plaid Cymru is committed to the devolution of policing and justice to Wales to empower us to implement and pursue policies that serve the interests of our citizens and communities. As argued by the Thomas Commission on Justice in Wales, this will allow us to create integrated people-centred services – from prisons to counselling to housing – to replace the present callous approach that prioritises targets over people's needs.

Police budgets have been slashed, putting far fewer officers on the street. Welsh forces have been hit harder than those in the rest of the UK, due to an unfair funding formula. Between 2010 and 2018, the number of police officers in Wales decreased by 9%.

More Police in our Communities

Plaid Cymru will recruit an extra 1,600 police officers – two for each community – to keep us safe. This would mean that our officers will be better rooted in our communities, instead of being stretched to cover large geographical areas with fewer resources. This would give the police the ability to focus on the priorities they need to keep us safe.

The extra police officers will help facilitate community engagement in which the police and the community can relay issues of mutual concern. Targeted, community-based problem-solving approaches improve crime reduction and rehabilitation.



Combating Crime

Crime Prevention

In recent years we have come to understand more about the relationship between Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) – traumatic events such as sexual or physical abuse, domestic violence, and parental separation – and future offending and imprisonment. The Welsh ACEs study showed that people who have experienced four or more ACEs are 14 times more likely to have been a victim of violence over the last 12 months, 15 times more likely to have committed a violent crime, and 20 times more likely to have been imprisoned at any point in their lifetime.

Eight in ten prisoners in Wales had at least one ACE and nearly half had four or more ACEs. Within the general population, around 46% have one ACE and 14% have four or more.

Community-based interventions are more effective at reducing re-offending and social exclusion than short-term imprisonment. Short custodial sentences offer limited opportunities for rehabilitation and many people leave custody with the same underlying issues as when they entered.

We believe that a preventative approach across health, criminal justice, education and other settings is more effective in tackling youth offending. Addressing the underlying causes of crime, such as protecting children from abuse or neglect, is proven to reduce criminal behaviour. In civil matters, early intervention and sound advice can prevent the involvement of the courts and can reduce hardship for many people.

As part of our preventative approach, we will implement a long-term substance use harm reduction strategy. Problems and deaths from substances are more prevalent in Wales than other parts of the UK. We want to reduce substance use and substance related deaths by investing in a long-term strategy. This should focus on harm reduction through a wide range of services and education programmes that treat problematic substance users as patients rather than criminals.



Combating Crime

Domestic Abuse

Whilst a member of the Domestic Abuse Bill Committee and co-chair of the Justice Unions and Family Courts Parliamentary Group, Liz Saville Roberts was the leading voice in Parliament for an overhaul of family courts in order to protect victims of domestic abuse.

Liz Saville Roberts' Ten-Minute Rule Bill highlighted the issue of cross-examination by perpetrators, particularly in vexatious court claims received cross-party support, and successfully put pressure on the UK Government to include the change in the draft Bill.

However, due to Boris Johnson's reckless parliamentary games, all the progress achieved on the Domestic Abuse Bill has been lost.

In the next parliamentary session, Plaid Cymru will continue to work hard for a robust piece of legislation including:

- A register for repeat domestic abuse register where abusers have been convicted of abusing two or more victims, administered by a properly resourced police force.
- Prevent the police or prosecutors from disclosing the address of a victim or witness of domestic abuse, coercive control or sexual assault to the person accused of the offence.
- Proper training for Police forces on Domestic Violence.
- Ensuring that Accident and Emergency Departments have trained Domestic Violence advisors who can advise doctors to refer cases to the Police.
- Ensuring that migrant and BME victims of domestic violence receive tailored support from authorities

Courts and Legal Aid

Plaid Cymru has been vociferously opposed to the British Government's reforms to the legal aid budget which have stripped thousands of people of access to legal aid. The Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 effectively reversed the previous legal aid scheme, removing most civil legal matters from the scope of legal aid.

Plaid Cymru will reverse the harsh cuts so that people who are currently unable to access legal aid can exercise their right to justice. This should include the establishment of a simpler and more generous assessment scheme for civil legal aid, ensuring all benefit recipients automatically qualify for legal aid, and making the contributions to legal aid more affordable.



Combating Crime

Prisons

Wales has the highest incarceration rate in western Europe, with one in every 667 people in the country behind bars. The prison-industrial complex in the UK has meant that four of the five prisons in Wales are overcrowded, leading to a deterioration of conditions for both staff and inmates.

One of the most effective ways of ensuring the rehabilitation of an inmate is to house them close to their local community and families. However, 39% of Welsh prisoners are held in England and 30% of prison spaces in Wales are for English inmates. We believe that inmates should be placed as close to their local communities as possible.

We do not believe that super-prisons are the most effective way of combating crime nor the best use of our resources. That is why we opposed the building of the Berwyn super-prison in Wrexham and the proposed super-prison in Port Talbot which was scrapped due to our opposition.

Entering the criminal justice system can either be a symptom of or cause longer-term issues. These include homelessness, mental health issues and substance misuse. Almost 25% of Welsh inmates were homeless when they entered prison, over 90% of prisoners have at least one of five psychiatric disorders, and there was a 475% increase in drug finds in prisons over the last year.

Poverty and poor health are being criminalised. This needs to change by ensuring that support services are well-funded and by tackling the underlying issues that can lead to criminality.

According to research by the Wales Governance Centre, those from Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic backgrounds are disproportionately represented in prisons and the criminal justice system. In 2017, black people were 4.5 times overrepresented in prison, Asian prisoners were 1.7 times overrepresented and individuals from mixed ethnic group were 2.4 times overrepresented.

Plaid Cymru will fully implement the recommendations of the Lammy Review to address the disparity of treatment and outcomes for black and minority ethnic people within the criminal justice **system, together** with the Angiolini Review on deaths and serious incidents in police custody.



Combating Crime

Women in Wales are especially ill-served by the justice system, with all Welsh female prisoners being held in one of the twelve women's prisons in England. This often results in the separation of young children from their mothers and makes family visits difficult. Moreover, there is a complete absence of Welsh language services for women prisoners.

The crimes committed by men and women can vary significantly. Women's offending tends to be of a less serious nature, which means they tend to serve a shorter sentence. In 2016, 74% of all women convicted were sentenced for less than 6 months.

Short-term sentences often bring considerable chaos and disruption to the lives of women and their families. Conversely, women who complete short-term sentences are more likely to re-offend than those sentenced to a court order.

Women are also overwhelmingly sent to prison for theft rather than violent offences. Often, women are stealing to feed their children or to support a partner's drug habit. According to the Prison Reform Trust around half of women have been victims of crimes that are more serious than the ones for which they are being imprisoned.

We will use suspended sentences for those women who are charged with non-violent crimes, dampening the disruption caused to them and their family. Rather than being 'soft' on crime, this is in line with best practice as it lowers reoffending rates in comparison to short-term custodial sentences.

Plaid Cymru will support a dedicated, small, prison or secure centres for female prisoners in Wales, to ensure access to family support networks as we accept that there will be occasions where a custodial sentence is appropriate and justified.

Rape

An estimated one in five women have experienced some form of sexual violence since the age of 16. Rape is still an under-reported crime and it is estimated by the Crime Survey for England and Wales that only one in six victims of rape report the incident to the police.

There were only three convictions for every 100 rape cases recorded by the police in England and Wales in the past year. Although the number of alleged rapes recorded by the police increased by 9%, the number of charges fell by 38%, prosecutions by 33% and convictions by 27%.



Combating Crime

More needs to be done to tackle this heinous crime and our approach will be multidisciplinary and work across a plethora of institutions. From an early age we will teach our children about respectful relationships and consent in schools whereby they can be informed about what constitutes a healthy relationship and what is permissible. We will also launch a public information campaign to make clear what constitutes as consent and tackle rape culture. For those that have already committed sexual assault we will ensure that perpetrator programmes are well funded in prisons and within probation teams in order to minimise the risk of this crime happening in future.

We will ensure that the police, magistrates and juries have the correct information with regards to the handling of complaints and the correct information with regards to what constitutes rape. Only a tiny minority of cases fit under the 'textbook' definition of rape and those within the Criminal Justice System must be aware that rape can be between partners or between those that have been intimate in the past.

For those that have been a victim of this crime we will ensure that Sexual Assault Referral Centres are properly funded with adequate training for the professionals that work there. We will also ensure that counselling services are available and well-funded as victims of rape can suffer from co-occurring issues relating to mental health and drug and alcohol abuse, especially due to self-medication.

Knife crime

Rising knife crime has coincided with austerity, having increased to record levels, with 1,353 in the UK in 2018, a 23% rise on the previous year. This is a reflection of the impact of Tory cuts to policing at Westminster and Labour cuts to local government in Wales. The Welsh Government's total spend on youth work has fallen from more than £40m five years ago to £32m in 2017-18.

We will work with youth clubs, sports governing bodies, schools, community groups, voluntary organisations and youth workers to improve youth services and to increase the availability of both formal and informal activities.



Combating Crime

Racism and Hate Crime

Everyone should be able to feel safe and respected within their communities. In Wales, Plaid Cymru will work with Police and Crime Commissioners to ensure that all hate crime – including homophobic, racist and anti-disability hate crime, and online abuse – is treated as a serious offence by Welsh police forces and investigated appropriately so that victims can feel confident and secure in reporting incidents.

We will proactively engage with a broad and representative spectrum of communities to ensure a plurality of views are heard and taken into account. In particular we will:

- Combat Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, anti-migrant sentiment and all forms of racism and bigotry in politics, on our streets, online and in our media.
- Work to increase the participation of minorities and women in politics and public life.
- Address the underlying socio-economic challenges faced by BAME communities, including providing funding for English and Welsh language tuition, to encourage successful integration in Welsh society.



HEDDLU
POLICE

WELSH CONSTITUTION

Plaid Cymru believes that Wales should become an independent member of the European Union. We want to forge a new relationship with the other countries of these islands based on equality. This will be made all the more urgent in the event of the UK leaving the EU.

Our aim is to achieve these objectives by 2030, and before then if circumstances allow.

We recognise that achieving these objectives will entail a number of interim steps, the first being for Plaid Cymru to form the Welsh Government following the 2021 Senedd election.

Further Devolution

During this period, we will press for the devolution of financial powers to the Senedd, plus the transfer of justice, economic development, welfare and culture powers that are currently reserved to Westminster.

Finance

We need greater financial powers to enable the Welsh Government to tailor taxation and funding to meet the needs of Wales. These include:

- Devolution of corporation tax as is the case in Northern Ireland.
- Devolution of Air Passenger Duty as is the case in Scotland and Northern Ireland.
- VAT revenues assigned to Wales as is the case in Scotland.



Welsh Constitution

Borrowing by the Welsh Government is currently limited to £1bn over five years. This is far too low. Wales should be permitted to borrow to invest up to £5bn over five years. This would be well within the fiscal guidelines proposed by both the Conservatives and Labour for the UK as a whole.

Justice

The two reports of the Commission on Devolution in Wales, together with the Thomas Commission on *Justice in Wales for the People of Wales* have made a powerful case for the devolution of Justice Powers to Wales and the creation of a distinctive Welsh jurisdiction and legal system. Together with the necessary resources for undertaking them, these powers will include:

- Policing
- Criminal Justice and the courts
- Sentencing, Legal Aid, the Crown Prosecution Service and the Judiciary
- The Prison Service and the Probationary Service

Economic Development

Economic powers currently reserved to Westminster that should be devolved to enable the Welsh Government to develop a more coherent economic development strategy include:

- Public Sector Pay
- Natural resources
- All licensing and oversight powers for the exploitation of natural resources
- The Crown Estate
- Water
- Ports and harbours
- Maritime Coastguard Agency
- Full control of the Wales and Border rail franchise
- Network Rail operation in Wales



Welsh Constitution

Welfare

A decade of austerity has had a severe impact on our poorest communities. That is why we are pressing for full control of Universal Credit. This will enable us, for example to permanently remove the bedroom tax, as is planned in Scotland.

The Westminster Government's Welfare Reform Act 2012 and the Welfare and Work Act 2016 have inflicted untold harm on thousands of people in Wales. In November 2018, a report by the UN rapporteur on extreme poverty found that poverty in the UK is "systematic" and "tragic" due to the deep "ideological" cuts to public services since 2010.

To tackle these problems Plaid Cymru will press for welfare powers to be devolved, and negotiate an appropriate fiscal framework in each case. They would include:

- Personal Independence Payments
- Carers Allowance
- Attendance Allowance
- Disability Living Allowance
- Winter Fuel Payments
- Cold Weather Payments
- Severe Disablement Allowance
- Industrial Injuries Disability Benefits
- Funeral Expenses Payments
- Sure Start Maternity Grant
- Discretionary Housing Payments

Culture

Plaid Cymru will demand the devolution of broadcasting to the Senedd so that we can develop a broadcasting sector made by the people of Wales, for the people of Wales, and accountable to the people of Wales.

Independence Commission

In November 2019 Plaid Cymru established an expert Independence Commission, chaired by Jocelyn Davies, the former Senedd Member for South East Wales and former Minister in the One Wales Government.



Welsh Constitution

The Commission's role is to prepare the way for an incoming Plaid Cymru Government in 2021. It will recommend the steps we will need to take to achieve independence for Wales in the coming decade.

The greatest obstacle to Welsh independence is the charge that we simply cannot afford it, that a country as rich as Wales in natural resources and in the skills and imagination of her people, is somehow too poor to be independent.

Fundamentally, the reason why there is such a large gap between the taxes we raise in Wales, and the money we spend on benefits and public services, is the way our economy has been mismanaged by successive centralised London governments.

We need independence precisely in order to change that.

In the meantime, we need to demonstrate that, even with the limited powers that the present devolution settlement offers us, we can begin to close the fiscal gap. The Independence Commission will undertake an analysis and produce recommendations on policies an incoming Plaid Cymru government should pursue over a ten-year period to ensure that the Welsh fiscal gap is reduced.

The Independence Commission will address the legitimate questions people have about how an independent Wales would work, on issues such as currency, borders, the UK national debt, and pensions.

The Commission will draw up a Written Constitution for an independent Wales.

It will also oversee the production of a Self-Determination Bill. This will be the paving legislation that an incoming Plaid Cymru Government will bring forward in 2021, aimed at preparing for the referendum on Welsh independence that will take place before the end of the next decade.

The legislation enacted by this Bill will enable the Plaid Cymru government to engage with as wide a cross-section of people and interests as possible. It will include the creation of a new organization with a full-time secretariat, to oversee the process leading to the referendum. A series of Citizens' Assemblies will inform the people of Wales on the wide-ranging issues and questions that the prospect of independence raises.

FINANCE AND TAXATION

The UK is one of the most unequal states in Europe. The richest region in the UK, Inner London, has a GDP of 614% of the EU average, compared to the UK's poorest region, West Wales and the Valleys, with a GDP of 68% of the EU average. This is a shocking indictment of a financial system that has impoverished Wales for the benefit of a select few in London.

Nine of the twelve countries and regions of the UK are persistently in deficit. The current UK economic and fiscal model is broken. Policies pursued by successive UK governments, both Conservative and Labour, underpin the high concentration of political and economic power in London and south east England with public investment being disproportionately concentrated in those areas at the expense of the rest of the UK.

In Parliament, our Treasury spokesperson Jonathan Edwards has used every opportunity to highlight the inequality at the heart of the British State, and to fight for fiscal fairness for Wales.

To begin addressing the imbalance, Jonathan presented a Ten Minute Rule Bill at Westminster seeking to establish an Office for Fair Funding, with a statutory obligation to deliver geographic wealth convergence. It would be a neutral and expert arbiter in disputes so that Wales would stand on an equal footing with London and the South East of England when it comes to funding.



Finance And Taxation

Public investment needs to have rebalancing the UK economy as a goal. What is needed is sustained, additional funding: to replace EU funds if Brexit happens – to help sustain the economy through the Brexit headwinds and, crucially to pump-prime the economy to redress the current and long-standing geographic imbalances. It is only by pursuing such a strategy that the full economic potential of Wales and the rest of the UK outside London and south east England can be realised.

Fair Funding for Wales

The present Barnett Formula for distributing funding to the devolved nations has been largely unchanged for forty years and is not fit for purpose. Tied to an outdated population-based formula it has been widely discredited as failing to relate to relative need. Plaid Cymru believes it should be replaced by an Office for Fair Funding, with a statutory obligation to deliver geographic wealth convergence across the UK. It would be an independent and expert arbiter in disputes.

Capital Investment

For too long Wales and the rest of the UK has suffered from low capital investment resulting in low productivity and low pay. At a UK level, funding for increased capital investment should be at least an additional 1 per cent of GDP per year (£20bn) for a minimum of ten years. Such investment would be funded by increased borrowing. The funding should be allocated on a needs basis with Wales being allocated at least an additional £1.5bn a year to fund the investment programme set out in this manifesto.

Increasing Revenue

Plaid Cymru believes that everybody should pay a fair share of tax so that we can all share excellent, world-class public services. That means that those who earn most – as individuals or as companies – must make a fair contribution.



Finance And Taxation

We advocate the following tax measures:

- We would reverse the British Government's planned cut on corporation tax. Cancelling the planned cut from 19% to 17% due in 2020–21 would raise around £5 billion.
- Income tax relief on pension contributions should be restricted to the standard rate of 20 per cent. This would raise revenue across the UK estimated by the Institute of Fiscal Studies at £11.5bn a year.
- We should increase the employee rate of National Insurance Contributions for higher rate and additional rate taxpayers from 2 per cent to 4 cent raising an estimated £2bn a year.

Taken together these three measures will raise an additional £20bn a year for funding vital public services. Thus, increased current spending on services will be funded from increased taxation, while additional capital investment will be funded by borrowing.

Transport

We would scrap the wasteful and environmentally harmful HS2 project. That would not only avoid the destruction of important habitats, it would also allow us to instead invest public transport infrastructure more fairly across the UK. HS2 currently swallows up a third of the UK Government's support for rail (£2.1 billion out of a total of £6.4 billion during 2017–18). It is clear from published and leaked reports that HS2 will cost far more than the planned £56bn - up to £100bn and may never reach beyond Birmingham. Now is the time to stop this vanity project and redirect that investment to areas, such as Wales and the north of England, that really need it.

Plaid Cymru opposes the construction of a third runway in Heathrow. Although Heathrow has put a £14bn figure on its expansion costs, others say the true figure will be nearer £30bn.

If the go-ahead is given for these English projects, which nonetheless have UK-wide impact, then Plaid Cymru will demand extra funding for Wales in terms of a full proportionate share, as determined by the Barnett funding formula.



Finance And Taxation

Defence

Plaid Cymru has consistently opposed the hugely wasteful and dangerous replacement of Trident. The replacement of Trident is expected to cost at least £205 billion. We will scrap this waste of money, allowing money to be invested in public services and infrastructure.



ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Biodiversity

Widespread loss and degradation of habitats across Wales is now as obvious to us as climate change. We must act swiftly and with determination if we want to halt the effects of the ecological crisis on our wildlife and begin to see recovery. This calls for action close to home and globally.

Plaid Cymru will bring forward legislation to tackle the extinction crisis, placing a legal obligation on this and future governments to act for the recovery of nature. Furthermore, we will secure robust, independent governance and accountability processes to uphold the law and stand up for our environment.

We will support greater transition to organic and other sustainable farming systems.

We will develop plans for renewable energy that operate in harmony with nature by identifying ecologically sustainable sites for offshore and onshore wind energy development, as well as potential areas for solar and tidal energy development. This will be a cornerstone of our 'Welsh Energy Atlas'. It will show where different forms of energy resources would have the least ecological impact, as well as potential sites for nature redevelopment and conservation.



Environment And Climate Change

Global Deforestation

Though forests are the lungs of our planet, they are being decimated across the world at an alarming rate. Wales has a role in resisting this trend. We will:

- Legislate to end the importation of goods that have caused deforestation.
- Invest in Overseas Development Aid that supports a transition to ecologically friendly farming.
- Require that imported palm oil comes from sustainable sources.
- Ban imports of soy, beef and other agri-commodities from illegally deforested land.

Protecting our Seas

Plaid Cymru supports a strong UN Global Ocean Treaty capable of creating a network of ocean sanctuaries covering at least 30% of oceans by 2030. This should involve an immediate moratorium on deep sea mining. All further activity within UK exploration contracts should be halted.

International Trade

Future trade deals undertaken by the UK, whether inside or outside the EU, should maintain and enhance environmental standards, minimise the environmental footprint of trade and make trade terms explicitly subject to environmental and human rights commitments. There should be specific protections for vital global ecosystems and habitats such as the Amazon, and for indigenous people.



Environment And Climate Change

Minister for the Future

Plaid Cymru proposes the establishment of a new Ministry for the Future. In the Senedd, we already have a dedicated Shadow Minister for the Future. As well as surveying the broad policy environment, the Minister will be tasked with taking a long-term view of our environment, with responsibility to:

- Ensure that Wales transitions to a low carbon, nature friendly economy.
- Develop a package of environmental and fiscal reforms to aid the transition to a greener economy.
- Encourage private sector investment in new green technologies.

Creating Sustainable Communities

We want Wales to play our part in leading the world in a just transition to sustainable communities. The first step is securing the devolution of all responsibilities for our natural resources, such as the Crown Estates, Ofgem and the National Grid, so that the power to act is in the hands of the people of Wales, through our democratically elected Senedd.

Carbon Mitigation

Our energy policy will be geared towards ensuring that our resources are used sustainably, tackling pollution, developing jobs in the post-carbon economy and increasing our energy independence.

We will invest in the acquisition and development of new large scale generating and storage capacity projects through our renewables revolution and provide support for community energy initiatives. Plaid Cymru will commission a national inventory of green energy potential in Wales, an “Energy Atlas for Wales”, which will identify areas where development will have the least ecological impact.



Environment And Climate Change

Plaid Cymru will increase community ownership of renewable energy to retain more benefits locally. We will:

- Establish a national energy agency, Ynni Cymru, which would be charged with realising Wales's green energy potential.
- Fully realise marine energy potential including wave, tidal range and tidal stream energy.
- Seek a complete ban on fracking and new open-cast coal mines.
- Oppose the development of new sites for nuclear power stations.
- Oppose the use of pylons through National Parks and Areas of Natural Beauty, advocating the use of underground and undersea cables to carry electricity where feasible.

Increasing Woodland

To make our contribution to tackling climate change we need to substantially increase the acreage of Welsh forestry. Since Natural Resources Wales took over responsibility for forestry in 2013, new woodland planted has been less than 1,000 hectares a year, and in some years has been below 500 hectares. We should aim for a minimum planting rate of 2,000 hectares a year from 2020, a target recommended by the UK Climate Change Committee.

We will examine the case for establishing a dedicated forestry organization to undertake the urgent task of addressing the Climate Emergency by planting more trees. We will ensure that this policy is closely connected with agri-environment incentives for farmers. Increasing our native tree woodlands not only has a major part to play in terms of carbon capture, but offers many other benefits including flood control, providing wildlife habitat, improving the quality of our landscape, and creating useful timber products.

While they were MPs, Plaid Cymru's team recently received a 100% rating in the Guardian's analysis of MPs' records on 16 indicative climate votes between 2008 and 2018, reflecting our long-standing support for ambitious long-term climate targets.



Environment And Climate Change

Clean Air

It is estimated that air pollution contributes to 2,000 deaths a year in Wales. We will implement a Clean Air Act for Wales to:

- Create clean air zones in our towns and cities.
- Give communities the right to place pollution-monitoring equipment outside schools and hospitals.
- Enable local authorities to introduce pollution and congestion charges.
- Set a national and regional plan to reduce air pollution in Wales.
- Reform planning law to require impact on air pollution to be given greater weight in the planning system.
- Accelerate the transition to an electric transport system so that petrol and diesel cars are phased out by 2030.

Reducing Plastic Waste

We will tackle the issue of plastic waste by banning single-use plastics, developing sustainable alternatives and increasing recycling targets. Plaid Cymru will place Wales at the forefront of the circular economy and ensure a Zero Waste Wales by 2030 through a combination of legislation and policy initiatives, such as Deposit Return Schemes, extended producer responsibility and use of planning laws, levies and tax-making powers.

Flood Prevention

We will place a greater emphasis on flood prevention in planning guidelines, recognising that climate change will make serious flooding events more likely in future. We will invest in prevention work to reduce new and repeat flooding across Wales, utilising land management techniques such as planting new woodland to manage water retention in the uplands and prevent water run-off.



Environment And Climate Change

Electric Vehicle Charging Network

We will invest in a national electric vehicle charging network across Wales, starting the transition towards a wholly electric fleet of public sector vehicles and increased use of private EVs. Currently Wales has eight of the counties with the lowest number of public car charging points per person across Britain. Cardiff has 45 public charging points, compared with 112 in Edinburgh and 258 in Milton Keynes. Without public intervention Wales will be left behind in the coming electric car revolution.

Bike Reward Scheme

Plaid Cymru will introduce a bicycle use reward scheme, to encourage people out of their cars and onto their bikes. This will lead to a significant reduction in road congestion and a boost for improved health and wellbeing.

We will develop a scheme where participants are paid for every mile they cycle to work, as is the case in the Netherlands. This would go hand in hand with significant improvements to cycling infrastructure, making cycling safer and more enjoyable for children and casual bike users. It would include nationwide improvements to cycle paths, the development of cycleways connecting economic hubs and providing train carriages with enough room for bicycles.



FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND FISHING

Food

The Welsh food and drink sector is integral to the prosperity and health of communities throughout Wales. The food supply chain is worth £7 billion to the Welsh economy, while the food and drink industry employs an estimated 240,000 people. We will seek to create a stronger domestic food market underpinned by a more resilient processing capacity supported by more pro-active public procurement policies. We will also protect and grow the Welsh brand, building on the highest environmental and animal welfare standards. We support a GMO-free Wales and the continuing moratorium on GM crops in the EU.

Plaid Cymru will fight for full powers for the Senedd over food labelling. This would allow us to build on and enhance the Welsh brand, helping promote and add value to our internationally renowned Welsh produce.

Plaid Cymru MPs will also seek to ensure that any future trade deals secure geographical indications for key Welsh food such as Welsh Lamb and Beef, Halen Môn/Anglesey Sea Salt, Pembrokeshire early new potatoes, Conwy Mussels, Carmarthen Ham and Welsh Wine.

Agriculture

Farming is the backbone of rural communities across Wales and agriculture is an important sector in terms of the broader Welsh economy. Currently, well over half of most Welsh farmer's incomes come from the direct payments they receive through the EU's Common Agricultural Policy. Direct payments provide stability and security to farmers and are crucial in ensuring the vitality of Welsh farms and the wider rural economy.



Food, Agriculture And Fishing

The Welsh Labour Government intend phasing out direct payments if we leave the EU, which would have a devastating impact on the rural economy and the fabric of rural communities. A Plaid Cymru government will retain a direct payment scheme. We can also protect this funding for Welsh farmers by remaining in the EU.

This general election has added more uncertainty around Brexit, since before it was called the UK government had guaranteed payments until the notional end of the Parliament, that is until 2022.

Plaid Cymru believes that more must be done to tackle bovine TB. Experience from other countries shows that we must be more effective in tackling TB in wildlife if we are to get a grip on the situation. Evidence from the Downs study recently underlined the contribution that removing badgers can have on TB breakdowns, which is why Plaid Cymru believes it has to be part of the answer in Wales.

Plaid Cymru is calling for the devolution of powers relating to dog attacks on livestock. In the north of Wales alone, there were 449 recorded cases of dog attacks between 2013 and 2017. As well as causing distress to animals they incur a large financial burden on farmers. The four main pieces of legislation that currently cover livestock attacks are antiquated and do not fit with current agricultural practices or the seriousness of the offence. Devolution and a change in the legislation is necessary to ensure the seriousness of this offence is understood, and that Welsh police forces have the powers to properly trace and deal with offenders.

Fishing

The Welsh fish and shellfish sector is worth £25 million to Wales and exports 90% of its produce, much of it to the EU. The vast majority catch shellfish, exporting them live to the continent or further afield via EU trade deals. Welsh capture fisheries, aquaculture producers and seafood supply chains are particularly vulnerable to any hold-ups in the transporting of their produce. If they are held up in ports, they can deteriorate and lose value. Any tariff barriers or non-tariff barriers would have an immense impact on their viability.

The frictionless trade which is a benefit of EU membership is therefore crucial. Remaining in the EU will help protect the future of our fishing families.

ANIMAL WELFARE

Wales can lead the way in the protection of animals and ensuring high animal welfare standards. We believe that there should be tougher sentences for those who abuse animals and that there should be an Animal Abuse Register for Wales.

New legislation

Plaid Cymru supports the introduction of new legislation to regulate the sale of pet animals online to ensure that animals are protected.

Primates are intelligent and socially complex animals and we believe it to be unethical to keep these animals as pets. As such, we will introduce new legislation to fully ban the keeping of primates as pets.

We will implement the recommendations of the Westminster Parliament's Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Select Committee on

ending breed specific legislation, as it fails to protect public safety and results in the unnecessary destruction of hundreds of dogs.

We will also introduce an online harms regulator with the power to require social media providers to ensure that animal cruelty content is not shared on their platforms.

We will ensure that any imports in existing and future trade agreements are consistent with Welsh and UK animal health and welfare standards, in order to maintain our current high standards and to provide a level playing field between our farmers and farmers in other parts of the world.

We will strengthen legislation against illegal puppy imports in order to end the exploitation of legislative loopholes by criminal gangs.



Animal Welfare

Brexit

Currently, 80% of animal welfare legislation comes from EU law. We cannot trust the Westminster government when it comes to animal welfare. As members of the EU, countries may adopt more stringent rules than the EU animal welfare legislation, which sets down minimum standards. However, the UK Government has been resistant to going further than the EU minimum in the past over fears that this would weaken UK competitiveness.

If we leave the EU, the UK will be seeking to strike trade deals with economies much larger than its own – countries such as the USA that have much lower animal welfare standards than the EU. It will be doing so from a position of weakness.

Plaid Cymru will demand that future trade deals seek to strengthen rather than weaken animal welfare legislation. However, the best way of securing animal welfare protection is by stopping Brexit, allowing us to build upon the foundations provided by EU law.



THE WELSH LANGUAGE

Plaid Cymru want a genuinely bilingual Wales where citizens can choose which language to use in their daily lives. There is wide support for the goal of reaching one million Welsh speakers by 2050. The education system has a key role to create the growth that is needed and to make fluency in both our national languages the norm.

To achieve that, we need to substantially increase the number of Welsh speakers across the country and ensure that speakers have opportunities to use the language wherever they choose to do so. We want to encourage a greater use of Welsh in the workplace in the public, private and third sectors, and in government. We will use procurement contracts and apprenticeships to promote the use of Welsh.

The Welsh language belongs to everybody in Wales and it is important that everyone has the opportunity to become bilingual. We will increase the availability of Welsh language education from nursery, to further and higher

education, right through to adult learning. We will achieve a world-class education system that is truly bilingual, giving everyone the opportunity to learn through the medium of Welsh.

A Welsh Education Act would ensure that everyone in Wales has the right to receive Welsh-medium education. Through this new law, Plaid Cymru will ensure that our citizens have the opportunity to develop skills in the Welsh language at every level as well as ensure the right to receive Welsh-medium education whatever a person's age or background.

Plaid Cymru will retain the post of Welsh Language Commissioner, ensuring that the Commissioner focuses chiefly on activities relating to setting and regulating Welsh Language Standards. New robust standards would also be introduced in the NHS which would secure the right to receive face-to-face services through the medium of Welsh.



The Welsh Language

We will establish a new high-status organisation, either at arms' length or embedded within the Welsh Government. This body will have responsibility for comprehensive language planning, the promotion and facilitation of the language in the community, and will be empowered to guide policy development across all sections and levels of government.

We will create an Economic Agency responsible for developing the economy of the western and northwest counties of Wales. As one of Europe's poorest regions, improving its prosperity is essential for underpinning the Welsh language and culture.

It is also crucial that Welsh speakers are able to access and use the digital world in Welsh so that they are not excluded from an increasingly digitized society. There is already ground-breaking work taking place in Wales and Plaid Cymru will support this work, including establishing a Digital Menter Iaith to ensure that we address the problem of digital language barriers.



CULTURE AND MEDIA

Plaid Cymru will place art, culture and language together with sport – all vitally important parts of our social tradition and way of life – at the heart of all our policies, from local government finance, through to health and education and our European policies. Creativity, innovation and a sense of place will be critical to the success of any economy in the 21st century and also carry a huge social dividend in wellbeing and community cohesion.

We will maintain free entry to museums, create a National Digital Library for Wales, and work with National Museums Wales to create a dedicated National Gallery for Contemporary Art.

We recognise that Wales has fewer bank holidays than almost any other nation in the EU. Plaid Cymru will make 1st March a national St David's Day bank holiday in Wales.

Plaid Cymru is seeking the devolution of broadcasting so that we can create a level-playing field with every other UK nation and give Wales the power to decide its own media and broadcasting policy. In government, we will promote a Welsh media that represents the people of Wales and what matters to them.



Y LLWYFAN

Ardal Blant

CHWARAEON

Y Sgubor

ALLANFA

Toiledau

VAVAN

POP

BYW

YNAS

EQUALITIES

Plaid Cymru believe in a fair and just society where everyone is treated equally and enjoys the same rights, regardless of their gender, ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation. Against the backdrop of a Tory Party who are intent on undermining the Human Rights Act, we will publish a human rights charter for Wales to protect the most vulnerable members of our communities. We will also seek devolution of responsibility for equalities legislation to Wales.

Plaid Cymru understands that despite the significant progress made, on average, women are paid at lower rates per hour than men for work of equal value and are more likely to be in part-time employment or under-employed.

We are committed to encouraging women's full and equal participation in the economy by ending gender segregation in the workplace and promoting more flexible working patterns. Our policy of providing 40 hours free universal education and childcare to children above one will ensure that parents have the option of returning to work and save on the cost of childcare.

A Plaid Cymru Government will promote all careers as being available to men and women. We will support women and girls to follow careers in key growth areas, especially in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) fields. We will create mentorships schemes to increase the visibility of women in non-traditional occupations and senior roles and to increase girls' awareness of the many different paths available to them. We will also introduce gender balanced management boards in Welsh Government funded organisations.



Equalities

Plaid Cymru will address the impact of austerity-led cuts on funding for specialist services for women who have experienced domestic violence or abuse and ensure continued support to marginalised and vulnerable groups in society.

We believe that LGBTQI+ voices and experiences need to be heard and affirmed. Having secured recurrent funding for the Gender Identity Clinic, Plaid Cymru will work to improve the provision and ensure timely access to the service. Schools in Wales will be required to keep a register of bullying incidents related to sexuality, to take action where necessary and to involve students in anti-bullying initiatives. We will promote LGBT participation in sport, as part of broader efforts towards healthier lifestyles, and work with clubs and organisations to reduce homophobic, transphobic and sexist behaviour.

Whilst we believe that disabled people should be encouraged and supported into employment, we do not believe it is appropriate to require disabled people to face the same obligations and threats of sanctions in looking for employment. We will establish sheltered employment schemes for those people who need a more supportive environment to return to work, as a stepping stone towards full participation in employment, and will work with accredited employers to create such schemes.

We will ensure local authorities and social landlords provide more disabled friendly and lifetime housing suitably adapted to people's needs. All schools will have appropriate access for physically disabled pupils. We will ensure that better support is available for people with learning difficulties, including increasing the number of specialist nurses in hospital settings to address inequalities in the provision of health services.

Plaid Cymru is committed to working with blind, partially sighted, and deaf people and those experiencing hearing loss, the organisations representing them, and professionals, to develop national strategies to ensure co-ordinated and equitable access to services.

Plaid Cymru will support the reform of the Gender Recognition Act to introduce a streamlined, de-medicalised process. We will support efforts to reform the Equality Act to include 'gender identity' as a protected characteristic and to remove the use of the terms 'gender reassignment' and 'transsexual' from the Act.



Equalities

Caring for New and Growing Families

Plaid Cymru believes that parents should be supported to work and take periods of leave that reflect modern working practices, including flexible working. With Brexit posing a real threat to workers' rights, Plaid Cymru commits to protect the right to work of pregnant women and new mothers by supporting a legal ban on employers making a woman redundant throughout pregnancy, and until six months after return from maternity leave, other than in very limited circumstances, as called for by the charity Maternity Action.

We will also tackle pregnancy and maternity discrimination in the workplace by supporting the call to legislate to add reporting of retention rates for women returning from maternity leave to the existing 'gender pay gap' reporting regime.

With a multitude of changes across new parents' lives, Plaid Cymru will work to support parents' mental health during what can be a joyous, yet challenging time by extending access to perinatal mental health services, including access to specialist mother and baby units within Wales.

We will tackle loneliness and isolation amongst new parents by establishing local Parent Networks, inspired by the successful *Mamma Gruppen* initiative in Sweden.

Plaid Cymru supports the call for maternity and paternity pay and leave to be extended in the case of babies that are born prematurely (before 36 weeks' gestation).

The recent Westminster legislation providing for free funerals for babies should be extended to cover those lost to early miscarriage.

Autism

Plaid Cymru believes that neuro-diversity should be regarded as an equalities issue, with public services required to make reasonable adjustments in the delivery of services. Consequently, we would make neuro-divergence a protected characteristic under the Equalities Act.

Plaid Cymru will pass an Autism Act for Wales that adopts a rights-based approach for people with autism, or who are suspected of having autism but are yet to receive a diagnosis.



WESTMINSTER REFORM

The Brexit crisis has demonstrated that Westminster is broken, and the people of Wales are paying the price. We are best served by our own National Parliament – the Senedd which is more inclusive and more representative than Westminster.

Plaid Cymru were the hardest working party at Westminster. In the last parliament, Plaid Cymru MPs asked more parliamentary questions and made more speeches than the Labour, Tory and Lib Dem MPs representing constituencies in Wales.

But we also have a duty to the people of Wales to protect their interests in the institutions that currently exist. That's why we have led the way in efforts to protect representative democracy against Boris Johnson's undemocratic shutdown of parliament and worked closely with other parties to block a no-deal Brexit.

Plaid Cymru is committed to overhauling the Westminster voting system, getting rid of First-Past-the-Post and turning it into a parliament elected under the Single Transferable Vote proportional system, in which all votes count equally.

Plaid Cymru supports reform of the House of Lords so that it becomes a directly elected upper chamber representing the regions of England, and so long as they remain part of the UK state, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland.

We will lead efforts to extend the right to vote to sixteen and seventeen-year-olds for Westminster elections, and we will campaign to give EU citizens and all those with permanent residency the right to vote in all elections.



Westminster Reform

Westminster's faults are fundamental. The confrontational architecture of the chamber encourages antagonism and distrust between political parties.

Plaid Cymru were at the forefront of the legal fight against Boris Johnson's unlawful prorogation of Parliament, with Hywel Williams, Liz Saville Roberts, Jonathan Edwards and Ben Lake all petitioners to the case to the Scottish Court of Session. We will continue to work across the parties to defend democracy at every opportunity.

We will cancel plans for the £5bn restoration and renewal of the Palace of Westminster. Instead of building a replica of a parliament that has seen barely any reform since the Nineteenth Century, we will campaign to move the Parliament out of London, in order to build a chamber that encourages civilized debate and which holds enough seats for all 650 MPs. We will also support abolishing the archaic and inefficient voting procedure in Westminster whereby MPs walk through lobbies for hours. Instead, we will support electronic voting, freeing up time for MPs to represent their constituents.

Currently, nearly one in five MPs has regular paid work outside parliament. We will lead efforts to strengthen the MPs' code of conduct, to include an upper limit of extra earnings pegged at no more than half of their regular salary.

Currently, there are 17 Assembly Members and seven Welsh MPs who employ members of their own families at the public's expense. Whether in the Senedd, Westminster or Brussels Plaid Cymru politicians will not employ family members.

As members of the Welsh Affairs Committee over the last two years, Plaid's Ben Lake and Jonathan Edwards have scrutinised the British Government on issues such as the proposed closure of Ford's Bridgend plant, City Deals and Growth Deals in Wales, Wales and the Armed Forces, the devolution of Air Passenger Duty to Wales, and the impact of Brexit on Wales.



Westminster Reform

We will put the interests of the people of Wales above political rivalries and discourage language that incites hatred or encourages disrespect. We commit to upholding a level of respect and professionalism between colleagues in Westminster.

Nationality on Electoral Forms

Currently, official electoral register documents force us to identify as British instead of Welsh. This is an insult to the 58% of people in Wales who identify as Welsh only and not British. We will introduce a Bill to Parliament changing electoral law so that all national identities – Welsh, British, Scottish, English and Irish – are recognised as official options.

We will give people the opportunity to identify as Welsh on their passports, as well as the chance to have a Welsh flag, a British flag, or neither on drivers' licences.

The Welsh Language in Westminster

Twenty-six years after the Welsh Language Act, Welsh speakers are still at a disadvantage when it comes to Westminster. Welsh speakers have a right to correspond with all Ministers and access all government and parliament services through the medium of Welsh.

MPs should have the right to speak Welsh in the House of Commons chamber so that all their constituents can feel represented.



PEACE AND SECURITY

Plaid Cymru wants to see Wales as part of a global community where we work together to keep each other safe and secure.

Both the Tories and Labour want to spend billions on the renewal of an ineffective and unnecessary nuclear weapons system. Plaid Cymru are determined to prevent the renewal of a weapon of mass destruction and to scrap Trident. We will resist all attempts to relocate nuclear weapons in Wales or in Welsh Waters.

We will instead base our regiments at home in Wales with a properly funded and looked-after defence force. We will also work with the UK government and other agencies on cyber-defences to prevent technology attacks upon Wales and the rest of the United Kingdom.

Plaid Cymru believes that, with the exception of binding international treaties, the decision to go to war should require the support of all four nations and we demand that a vote is held in the Senedd prior to any UK-supported military intervention in foreign affairs. The people of Wales have a democratic right to support or oppose such incursions.

Plaid Cymru will take responsibility for our Welsh based veterans, in consultation with the Welsh Veterans Partnership. Veterans have been forgotten by successive governments, with vast numbers continuing to suffer mental and physical health issues with little access to the services they require. We will make sure that veterans receive excellent health care, including mental health care, and adequate housing.



WALES AND THE WORLD

In government, Plaid Cymru will develop an international policy for Wales that restores our position as a great trading nation. We will introduce a Wales International, responsible for attracting new businesses, talent and industry from around the world, but also for putting Wales onto the global map for our exports.

We will also establish, as in Ireland, a separate National Enterprise Agency, responsible for development inside Wales. A particular responsibility for this new body will be to ensure equitable investment and sustainable development throughout Wales.

Plaid's Ben Lake has forged connections with the Consular Association in Wales in order to emphasise the importance of diplomatic representation. He raised the issue through a Westminster Hall debate in June 2019.

Plaid Cymru will continue to support strategic trade missions across the world to foster awareness of Wales in new territories and take advantage of new opportunities that this provides to create jobs. We will publish a set of trade negotiation principles, including for labour and environment standards, and protection of the rights of cultural and language minorities.



Wales And The World

We will encourage other countries to establish diplomatic representation in Wales, taking inspiration from countries such as Catalonia and Québec, whose capital cities host dozens of Consulates-General and Consulates, and have emerged as thriving international hubs.

Whilst chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Catalonia, Arfon's Hywel Williams was the leading voice in Westminster against Spanish state repression in Catalonia. Hywel's urgent question in October 2019 led to cross-party support for the defence of freedoms and civil liberties in Catalonia, and gained international press attention.

We will establish a formal relationship between the Welsh Government and the Consular Association in Wales as a starting point for developing a strategy to encourage more diplomatic representation in Wales, bringing together key businesses, with a shared objective of enhancing the Welsh economy.

We will call for Welsh associate membership of UNESCO, the Food and Agriculture Organisation, and the International Maritime Organisation.

Tourism

Plaid Cymru recognises the importance of the tourism industry across Wales as an employer and in attracting investment into the country. We want to promote Wales as a high quality, sustainable tourism destination with activities and experiences based on our natural resources, our produce, our unique coastline and landscape, and our language, culture and heritage.

We will increase funding for tourism promotion for Wales to take its place amongst the best destinations world-wide.

Currently, the tourism industry is held back by unfair taxes and a Government that is failing to promote Wales as a global tourist destination. Plaid Cymru want to see tourism VAT on hospitality cut to 9% to put Wales ahead in the international tourism market.



Wales And The World

We will establish a National Academy for the Welsh tourism sector to provide hands-on learning from apprenticeships to degree level, offering world-class vocational and professional development for workers across the sector. We will also advocate associate membership of the UN World Tourism Organisation.

We will improve the tourist experience by ensuring that:

- There is joined-up services and knowledge so that tourists can stay close to events.
- Hotels have access to the latest tourism information.
- Public transport is available when required.
- Hotels provide the best quality of service, including the use of foreign languages.

We will support the development of locally-run municipal camping sites in our towns and cities.

We will launch a Celebrate Wales year to stimulate tourism across the country.